

**Governor's Advisory Council on Disability Affairs (GACDA)
Meeting Minutes, July 27th, 2017**

GACDA held a meeting on June 27th, 2017, in the Thomas Jefferson Room at the Claiborne Building in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. Chairperson Lynette Fontenot presided.

Present:

Lynette Fontenot	Sharon Hennesy
Pam Darby	Paula Rodriguez
Jamie Wong	Mary Breaud
Sharon Buchert	Stephen Kauffman
Ann Darling	Sandra Winchell
Katie Corkern	Ava Dejoie
Amy Dawson	Sharon Buchert
Cynthia Obier	Nancy Hicks
Mark Thomas	Tara Leblanc
Linda Theriot	Linda Kocher
Gale Dean	Representative Malinda White
Senator Gerald Boudreaux	

Absent:

Christopher Kirby, Donna Breaux, Harry Brady, Jamie Karam, Joshua Hollins, Kelly Monroe, Laura Brackin, Laureen Mayfield, Libby Murphy, Paula Rodriguez

CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS

GACDA Chairperson, Lynette Fontenot, called the meeting to order, and asked everyone to briefly introduce themselves. A quorum was present.

Approval of minutes

Lynette asked members to review the minutes for approval. Sen. Gerald Boudreaux motioned to approve the minutes and Tara LeBlanc seconded. There were no objections and the minutes were approved.

LA Department of Health Updates

Tara Leblanc from the Office of Aging went over the legislative session and the budget. She informed GACDA members the budget bill had not been signed yet so they are waiting on guidance on how the \$60 million set aside will affect agencies.

She explained the Traumatic Head and Spinal Cord Injury Fund is taking an \$800,000 reduction. As of right now we can estimate that no one receiving services today will be cut and those individuals have a \$50,000 lifetime cap. There are no funds to fill new waiver slots, and there are only three ways to get an aging waiver slot. Members asked if there was an issue with the fines and it was indicated the income revenue is not enough when individuals can't pay the fines or are paying the bare minimum.

Behavioral Health gave an update on getting peer support specialist integrated throughout their systems of care and have incorporated an additional training for their

peer support specialists. The next training is scheduled for tomorrow and Thursday in Lafayette. OBH wants to utilize the medical block grant funds to help maintain people functioning in our society.

Mark Thomas provided the update for OCDD in regards to the recent legislative session. He said there were a couple of bills that made its way through and were very positive. He stated SB 58 is dedicated to changes within the human service districts and authorities, and the most important thing is there has to be representation on the board of directors or respective districts from the developmental disability community and a commitment of a certain amount of dollars to the developmental disability services. There was a concern if there was enough commitment to serve individuals with developmental disabilities. HB495 allowed for the purchase of the Northwest facility. It is important to OCDD to sell those properties because after the properties are vacated there are legacy costs which covers maintenance, security, and risk management even though the facility is closed. It is important to close those facilities and home and community based services. Mark indicated they still have not received the finalized budget from the division of administration or the \$60million set aside. We are waiting to see what guidance we will get from the division. Mark stated the need to advocate because every dollar invested saves seven dollars for early intervention. Most of the reductions will be around cost participation. There were assumptions made when looking at eligibility that we will not be able to make into the future and fewer kids will qualify for fewer services.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS AND DISCUSSION

Transportation: Gale Dean informed the Council they went over the transportation survey. She informed members DOTD is having a Conference this November 6th-8th in Shreveport and the committee was asked to make a presentation or participate on a panel or workshop during the conference. It was recommended that there be a person with a disability who uses the transportation services in attendance. We looked at each survey question, and we suggest that people with disabilities take and complete the survey so the results will not be skewed. DOTD has a survey they would be willing to share with the committee.

Education: The committee did not have a quorum but there was a discussion. They went over legislative updates from Donald Songy regarding what will impact early childhood. TOPS will be fully funded, and the MFP will have an increase of \$8 million for service of students with disabilities, which will double what was previously appropriated.

Employment: Bambi Polotzola stated that there wasn't a quorum but the committee reviewed the draft for the Employment First report. The committee looked at the language in the report to make sure it is clear and that David Hoff would be drafting the report. Bambi stated the implementation and advocacy will be done on behalf of GACDA for Employment First. She also stated OCDD has a transition plan to home and community based services from institutional settings.

Accessibility: Stephen Kaufman mentioned there was discussion regarding two bills that directly affected accessibility, HB 337 and HB 582. The committee decided to have a survey regarding accessibility of the capitol from people who have attended events and rallies at the capitol. The committee also recommended that the accessibility page information be updated on the legislative website and the Council was in agreement with the recommendation.

Discussion of Legislative Session

Ava Dejoie stated they were able to come out of the budget cycle with \$7.4 million in state general funds, which is more than last year. She stated she was pleased to report that come July 1st they expect to take a thousand people off the waiting list by opening order of selection one. They are not able to open all orders of selection right now. Ava stated that each region of the state will have a comprehensive one stop which will have all the programs under WIOA. We have received an increase in WIOA funding for this year. Some offices have had significantly more funding this year. Bambi went over key legislation that was signed by the governor. SB 58 will have requirements on representation to have individuals with developmental disabilities on the boards so there is a variety of representation as well as a 9% set aside for services with developmental disabilities. SB 152, Troy Carters bill, allows people with disabilities to choose to have a designation on their driver's license. HB253 changes terminology from hearing impaired to deaf and hard of hearing. HB 79 was ended corporal punishment for students with disabilities. HB 337 expanded a credit for state income tax and the council further discussed HB 337.

Inclusive Art Show and GOLD Awards

Jolan Jolivette informed members the ADA Symposium will be July 26th at the Claiborne Building and the keynote speaker would be Kristi Avalos, who is a national ADA expert. He informed members there would be breakout sessions on local disability, higher education, and employment. Jolan also stated the Inclusive Art Show and GOLD Awards will be on November 15, 2017, at the Old State Capitol.

NEXT GACDA MEETING

The next GACDA meeting will be September 19th, 2017.

MEETING ADJOURNED

The meeting was adjourned.